

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONS

MILITARY-MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS: ANALYZING U.S. NAVY OFFICERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE NEWS MEDIA

**Jesse John V. Flores-Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.A., Seattle University, 1996**

Master of Science in Information Systems and Operations-December 2003

Advisor: Steven J. Iatrou, Department of Information Sciences

Second Reader: Karen Guttieri, Department of National Security Affairs

A noticeable civil-military gap has emerged in American society, where the public does not fully understand the mission of the military and the military does not understand the expectations and demands of the public in a liberal democracy. Basically, maintaining a good rapport with the media is vital to bridge this "civil-military gap." Military cooperation with the media, by allowing appropriate access, enables journalists to communicate with the military base of support in the public, and thus may prove vital to effective military operations. As a result, the public will be better prepared to embrace "good news" stories that are introduced by the military and also prepared to accept the times when a negative story breaks in the news.

From an online survey administered to the unrestricted line (URL) community of Navy officers, this research identifies instances of Navy officer bias that is derived from family background, limited interaction and experience in working with the media, and inherently from bias that is subordinated from senior naval leadership. Based on these findings, the author believes that the U.S. Navy may not continue to mold individuals to think in new and innovative ways for future naval missions unless they are given a much broader and more thorough roadmap of critical thinking and analytical skills, which invariably includes the consideration of military-media relationships when planning and executing military operations.

KEYWORDS: Military-Media Relationships, Bias, Public Affairs, Civil-Military Relations, Civil-Military Operations, Information Operations, IO, CMO, Civil Affairs, CA